



August 2003 Edition

ACA Website Goes “Live”

In order to better communicate with the workforce and the public, the Office of Competitive Sourcing Acquisitions (ACA) has established a website. The website contains information related to the A-76 process in general as well as specific information concerning the on-going AFSS competition. For example, visitors to the site will be able to read the current edition of “The Briefer” along with all back issues. In addition, the site will contain a page of accomplishments to date, documents, briefings, contacts, on-going activities, organization chart, frequently asked questions (FAQs), etc. ACA will update the site as necessary in order to provide the most current information to the workforce and the public. Please visit www.faa.gov/aca for the most up to date information on the AFSS competition.

PWS Team Update

The Performance Work Statement (PWS) Team extends their appreciation to all the participants in the functional scoping process, including those individuals who have worked diligently behind-the-scenes to ensure the unique aspects of their respective facilities are portrayed in a comprehensive and accurate manner. Thanks to all who made time in their busy work and personal schedules to help develop this critical document!

The PWS Team continues to refine the “activity dictionary,” which captures the activities of and services provided by AFSS. During the last week of July, the PWS Team met in Alexandria, VA to reexamine the most current version of the activity dictionary. The team further organized and grouped specific activities to create a more concise product while retaining the unique aspects of the AFSS function. In addition, service and activity

definitions were further clarified. The PWS Team is currently verifying that requested documents (waiver requirements, Letters of Agreement, etc.) from all facilities are on file.

ACA is working with the Air Traffic management team to review the data gathered in the functional scoping phase to determine the scope of the AFSS competition. The results of their analysis will be incorporated into the sources sought announcement, outlining the requirements of the PWS, which is scheduled for release this fall.

Human Resources

ACA personnel recognize that AFSS employees have numerous questions regarding the personnel processes surrounding the A-76 competition. The answers to these questions must come from personnel experts. Joann Kansier, ACA-1, met with Mary Ellen Dix, the Acting Assistant Administrator for Human Resource Management, AHR-1, and presented her with a list of personnel questions related to the AFSS competition that need to be answered. Ms. Dix acknowledged AHR’s role in this process and indicated that personnel-related questions need to be forwarded to AHR. Additionally, AHR made a commitment to name a liaison to work with ACA by the end of August. Suzanne Hynes will work with the AHR liaison to track AHR’s progress in answering the personnel-related questions.

Studies Team Update

July was a busy month for the Study Team and the work schedule for August is even more challenging. The primary products the team will produce within only a few months include a complete inventory of equipment inside AFSSs, a recommendation regarding Government Furnished Property (GFP), and several other studies conducted with the help of government contractors.



The largest task assigned to the Study Team is to compile a complete inventory of equipment located in and interfaced with the AFSSs. Some of this information is recorded in national databases, but the data is not always complete or consistent. Therefore, the Study Team made several site visits. (Due to time and financial constraints, visits to all sites were impractical.) Immediate actions were taken to give Airway Facilities Service (AAF) background information on ACA and ask for assistance compiling the inventory of the AFSSs. A detailed data collection survey tool was developed and distributed to the eight regions to allow AAF managers and field personnel to verify and add valuable data to the study. Briefings were given to the Airway Facilities Management Team and AAF division managers and a training session was conducted in early August for the regional managers to discuss the data collection survey tool.

The Study Team is also working on criteria and a matrix for determining GFP. Discussions with AAF have emphasized the importance of understanding potential impacts to AAF field personnel and planning for mitigation of these impacts. Additionally, MITRE Center for Advanced Aviation System Development (CAAASD) has interviewed ACA employees and delivered a Risk Management Plan. MITRE is also conducting a technical constraints study with help from members of the Study Team.

Workforce Binders Released

On August 1, the first shipment of the AFSS workforce binders (a total of 68) was mailed to each AFSS and regional facility. One binder went to each facility manager and AFSS regional focal point. The shipment of the binders was delayed due to the release of the new OMB A-76 circular on May 29, 2003. All frequently asked questions were reviewed and, where necessary, responses were revised or added to address the new circular.

The binders contain pertinent information related to the on-going AFSS competition. Each binder contains a letter of purpose, documentation checklist, message from ACA, The Briefers, Feasibility Study, Communications Plan, A-76 Circular, Competitive Sourcing FAQs, AFSS A-76 Study FAQs, Glossary, and Sources of Information. Tabbed portions of the binder allow for the most recent information regarding the PWS and Human Resources updates to be added, once they are available.

These binders will be updated on an as-needed basis. Due to the large number of workforce binders being shipped and the strain on the production department (over 200 binders in total), the second shipment of approximately 125 workforce binders began on August

20, 2003. In addition to copies being shipped to the AFSSs and regions, copies are also being sent to the FSDPSs.

ATCA Symposium

On June 25, as part of its public symposium series, the Air Traffic Control Association (ATCA) conducted a forum entitled "A-76, An Objective Method for Constructive Change". Joann Kansier, Jim Little, and James Sizemore, who all briefed the more than 200 people in attendance regarding the role of A-76 in the FAA and the status of the pre-planning activities for the AFSS competition, represented ACA at the meeting.

The meeting began with a briefing by Jack Kalavritinos from OMB to give a broader perspective of the use of A-76 in the federal government as well as answer some questions about the revised Circular. Ron Page, Manager of the FAA Budget Policy Division, gave an update of the FAIR Act inventory process, which forms the basis for A-76 at the FAA and across the federal government. Next, a representative from Raytheon presented the view of A-76 from the private sector, focusing on what makes a fair and successful competition.

ACA made several presentations to the audience and answered questions regarding the AFSS competition. Joann spoke mostly about the role of A-76 in the FAA that focused on how A-76 can be used as a dynamic vehicle for change with the end result being an improved service that costs less. Jim discussed the high-level acquisition strategy to inform the audience about the approach that the FAA was considering. James briefed on the status of the Performance Work Statement and the functional scoping aspect of its development.

Finally, ATCA hosted a panel discussion moderated by Marty Pozesky that offered the audience a perspective on the A-76 process from various stakeholders. Included on this panel were Kate Breen, NAATS representative to ACA for the AFSS A-76, Marilyn Jackson-Brame, Deputy Director of ACA former Flight Service Station Manager, Ramon Contreras, Director of Strategic Sourcing for Grant-Thornton, and John Fairfield, Vice President for Strategic Initiatives, CSC Federal Systems.

MITRE Users Forum

On July 7, the MITRE Corporation hosted a Users Forum for those customer organizations that expressed interest in attending and providing input to the AFSS competition. Organizations represented at the meeting included the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association



(AOPA), Small Aircraft Manufacturers Association (SAMA), the Air Transport Association (ATA), American Association of Airport Executives (AAAE), National Business Aircraft Association (NBAA) and the Airline Pilots Association (ALPA).

The meeting gave ACA a chance to inform these important customer groups about the A-76 process and the pre-planning activities associated with the AFSS competition. In addition, the customer organizations were able to give valuable insight to ACA regarding how their customers viewed the importance of flight service as well as expected outcomes from the competition. ACA was impressed with the level of interest shown by and pledges of commitment from the organizations represented and promised future interactions as the competition progresses. ACA believes that a successful competition hinges, in part, on the engagement of the customers of flight service to ensure that the outcomes of changes in the AFSS system reflect the needs of its users.

Acquisition Team Update

July was a busy month for the Acquisition Team that included the culmination of weeks of procurement strategy planning. The release of a comprehensive Request for Information (RFI) in June kicked off the competitive sourcing acquisition. ACA received 17 written responses from industry, as well as, from the ATP working group (pre-cursor to the MEO) and as a result conducted one-on-one sessions with those respondents. The RFI and follow-up sessions have allowed the gathering of timely and accurate insight from potential service providers, which is a critical input into the development of a technically sound acquisition approach that involves all stakeholders.

To make the process work, ACA and potential service providers must focus on establishing a cooperative working relationship that targets achieving maximum contract performance. Soliciting industry and government comments as part of an informal process is a way to maximize the potential for achieving these objectives. Using a multi-phased approach, the Acquisition Team's intends to give ACA and potential service providers better insight into potential lifecycle solutions for AFSS innovation and services.

The next step is to release a Sources Sought announcement, which will coincide with the Public Announcement of FAA's AFSS Competitive Acquisition. The Sources Sought responses should provide clearly defined organizational capabilities and help the Acquisition Team limit the field to a more manageable number of potential, viable service providers.

FAA Reauthorization Bill Update

During the past few months, the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives have passed differing versions of the FAA Aviation Investment and Revitalization Vision Act. The House bill would allow the AFSS competition to continue while the Senate version would bar the FAA from competing flight service station personnel.

A House-Senate conference committee was formed to negotiate the differences. The conference committee compromise would allow the AFSS competition to continue. It is expected that Congress will take action on the bill upon return from their August break. However, if an agreement cannot be reached, Congress has indicated it could just extend the FAA Reauthorization Bill for 6 months or a year. Under this scenario the AFSS competition would continue.

Biographies

ACA Communications Team Members

Ragena Aarnio is the Manager of the Business Management Division, ACA-100. Her duties include external communication with DOT, OMB, IG, GAO, Congress and special interest groups; ACA employee training and development; performance management; budget; HR; LMR; and organizational policies and standard operating procedures.

Ragena began her career in the flight service option as an Air Traffic Control Specialist (ATCS) in Ontario, CA. She was also an FPL at Terre Haute, IN; Oakland, CA; and Leesburg, VA AFSSs. The past ten years she has held a variety of staff positions at Headquarters, including staff specialist in the Aviation Weather Directorate, Special Assistant to two Program Directors, and Requirements Development Specialist in ARS.

Suzanne Hynes officially joined the ACA team on July 27th. Suzanne takes over the position that Jack Nimmo vacated as the Communications Team Lead. Her 21-year career with the FAA includes thirteen years of ATCS, staff and management positions within the flight service option. Her most recent position was that of Air Traffic Manager (ATM) of Cedar City, UT AFSS. Suzanne has also held staff positions at Southern Region Headquarters and completed a detail as the Acting ATM of Montgomery, AL ATCT. She hopes to fill the large vacuum that was created when Jack returned to Jonesboro AFSS. One of her first priorities is to resume regular communiqués with the field.



Kate Breen joined the FAA in September of 1990 and has been assigned as an ATCS to the Bridgeport, CT AFSS since that time. Although she did spend two years in FAA headquarters as the NAATS ATX Liaison, Kate describes her current position as the NAATS A-76 National Representative as the most challenging.

Harry Crapo of Grant Thornton LLP provides consultant support to ACA on the AFSS competition. Harry has over 13 years of consulting experience to numerous agencies in the Federal Government. Harry supports ACA-1 and her management staff by providing daily program management support. In addition, he provides support to the ACA communications team manager and is also responsible for content management of the ACA website. Harry previously consulted to the FAA (AUA-200) with a past employer.

Upcoming Events

- Complete functional scoping activity
- Obtain results from pilot survey
- Finish data collection for PWS
- Joint Resources Council on September 30, 2003
- Complete facility and equipment inventory
- Public announcement in early October
 - Includes scoping determination proposed process
- Release of Source Sought Announcement in early October
 - Includes competition scope, equipment and facility inventory
- Finalize risk management plan
- Determination on GFE/GFP
- Determination of eligible offerors by late November

